

very, very apropos phrase here in describing what we have as the Pelosi Petroleum Price Increase—PPPI. And I think that really does coin it very well, because we know that 2 years ago tomorrow, Speaker PELOSI made this statement: “The Democrats have a commonsense plan to deal with skyrocketing gasoline prices.”

Now since that period of time, and I just was struck, I saw a cartoon in today's USA Today in which they go through this litany of proposals. We're telling Big Oil to make sure that they bring prices down, and proposals are thrown out in this cartoon, saying, Why don't we deal with the question of nuclear energy? Absolutely not.

Why don't we look at clean coal? Absolutely not.

Why don't we look at possibly responsible, environmentally sound exploration in ANWR? Absolutely not.

Why don't we look at using the cleanest, safest, most cost effective energy source, that being nuclear? We haven't built a nuclear power plant in 30 years. Absolutely not.

Why don't we increase our refinery capacity? There has not been a single new refinery built in 30 years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, these are the kinds of proposals that we very much hope we will be allowed to offer. The way to do that is to defeat the previous question on this rule so that we can say to our constituents, we are going to take firm, bold, dramatic steps to decrease the cost of the gasoline that they are putting in their cars every single day.

I thank my colleague for yielding. I thank him for his very thoughtful comments.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman. I believe that what the gentleman from California is saying is this: Is that we need supply-side answers to a problem when America needs the energy the most right now. And supply-side answers is what we would get if we defeat this rule.

We reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. ARCURI. I thank my friend from Texas for his comments.

I would just like to make two points in that regard. The first point is that he mentioned that this bill doesn't deal with the LNG issue. And I would beg to differ. This bill ensures that the Coast Guard will be there to ensure and protect the safety of our liquefied natural gas facilities that are built out in the deep water or out in the ocean. It's critical. Security is absolutely critical to these facilities, and that's exactly what this bill insures.

Secondly, my friend mentions that we have not done anything about energy. Well, I would respectfully say that anyone who says that, I would have to ask them where have they been for the past 16 months. We have done a great deal with respect to energy. The difference is that we haven't done anything to help large oil companies because we believe that they are part of the problem. We have done things to

help develop alternative energy, because that is the future of America. It's about making America less dependent on foreign oil and less dependent on the large oil companies. That's what we have done. That's what Democrats believe in, and that's what we will continue to do.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I would like to associate myself with his opening comments in regards to both the previous question as well as the rule. However, I'd like to speak to the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2830, the Coast Guard Authorization Act. I believe this legislation is of tremendous importance for our magnificent Great Lakes actually because of title V which at long last provides for Federal regulations of ballast water in the lakes.

And why is this important? Because since the Great Lakes were opened to international shipping in the fifties and the sixties, many invasive species have entered the lakes through the untreated ballast water of the oceangoing freighters, also known as salties.

Let me just share with you some of these species and the problems that they have caused on the very delicate ecosystem of our Great Lakes.

The round goby was introduced to the Great Lakes in the late eighties through untreated ballast water. This fish is an aggressive and voracious feeder that can forage in total darkness. They can take over prime spawning grounds for native fish and upset the ecosystem. These unwanted invaders are flourishing in the Great Lakes and they are causing great damage, Mr. Speaker.

The ruffe entered the lakes in 1986 through untreated ballast water from Eurasia. This spiny perch is capable of explosive population growth that threatens native fish like walleye and pike, and their spiny gills make them very difficult for native predators to eat.

Another species, the spiny water flea, also entered the lakes around 1986 from its home in Great Britain and Northern Europe from untreated ballast water. These are actually not insects, but they're tiny crustaceans that have resource managers very worried because they compete for food directly with young native perch and other small fish. It also makes it very difficult for small fish to consume, so only larger fish can actually feed on them, again leading to explosive growth of this invasive species.

Another species, the zebra mussel, which was first discovered in 1988 and introduced into Lake St. Clair actually by the Caspian Sea, again from untreated ballast water. These species

have had a tremendously negative impact on recreational watercraft and drinking water intake pipes throughout Southeast Michigan, and now have spread throughout the entire Great Lakes.

In addition, they have filtered the water to such a degree that when combined with the historic low lake levels that we are currently experiencing, and increased nutrients in the water, it's led to very destructive and dangerous algae blooms throughout the lakes, which are causing beach closures and all kinds of other problems.

These unwanted species have cost State and local governments tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars to combat the damage that they have caused. And all of this is why I have been fighting for ballast water regulation since I came to the Congress, and why I worked very hard to see that it was included in this important legislation.

The passage of this legislation will place new requirements on oceangoing vessels entering the Great Lakes. Vessels operating in United States waters will be required to operate ballast water treatment systems that meet interim standards beginning next year, and more stringent standards will take effect in the year 2012.

Until ballast water treatment systems are installed, vessels bound for United States ports must exchange their ballast water and perform salt water flushing.

And States like my State of Michigan, which have grown tired of waiting for Federal action, and have actually initiated their own ballast requirements, will be able to operate our own programs until the final Federal standards do take effect.

I certainly want to thank Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA for their leadership on this issue. Again, I oppose this rule; however, I do support the underlying legislation. I think it is long past time to act on this issue. I urge my colleagues to support the Coast Guard Authorization piece of legislation that will greatly assist in protection of a great national treasure, our magnificent Great Lakes.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York, a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Mr. HALL.

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I would like to agree with and concur with the comments of my colleague, the gentlelady from Michigan, regarding the merits of the bill. I'm pleased to serve on Transportation and Infrastructure, and I'm happy to say that Chairman OBERSTAR always goes the extra mile to incorporate everybody's opinions from both sides. And I believe this is a good bill that deserves all of our support.

Regarding the allegations or the comments that are being made about this Congress not being interested in or producing bills that will produce energy, I beg to differ.